

struck the right tone. As concerned as we are—and we should be concerned—we take heart in the fact that this country has been strengthened by this crisis and this challenge. We have come together in what has been called the “re-United States of America.”

Many people understand patriotism from a different perspective than they did just a few weeks ago. We stand in awe, in respect, and in admiration of many heroes in America. The President acknowledged them last night—the firefighters in New York City and across America, the people who are in law enforcement, medical rescue teams, teachers, postal workers, and of course the men and women in uniform who daily put their lives on the line for America. It is appropriate that we remember them as we try to wrestle with our personal concerns about safety and security since September 11.

I thought the President struck just the right chord in calling on America to bring out the very best in our Nation.

Within the last several weeks, Congress has been called on by the President many times to provide him with the authority and the resources to deal with this crisis. Without exception, Congress has responded in a strong bipartisan manner in an effort to make certain the President and certainly the armed services have all they need to execute this war effectively.

This week, the Senate considered the intelligence authorization bill which gives additional resources to the intelligence community. This is an important component of our effective defense of America and defense of our values. As a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I know full well that one of the most heartening events that has occurred since September 11 is the fact that countries around the world are now cooperating with the United States in fighting terrorism. Some of those countries, which have been our closest allies for years, frankly, did not take this subject as seriously as they should have. Now they do. As they cooperate with us, we have an opportunity to reach out and try to stop the spread of terrorism across the world.

#### CONFLICT DIAMONDS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, yesterday I had a press conference with two of my colleagues, Senator DEWINE of Ohio and Congressman TONY HALL of Ohio as well. We are cosponsors of legislation which deals with a phenomenon that has become increasingly important in this discussion.

It is not enough we search out Osama bin Laden and his lieutenants in their caves in Afghanistan and stop those cells of terrorist activity around the world. We have to find a way to starve them of the assets and resources they need to succeed. The President made it

clear this week that this has to be an immediate response by the United States. So as part of antiterrorism, we have created new authority to deal with money laundering—money laundering and transfers of money that have been used to finance the terrorist network.

A little over a week ago, though, we came to learn that there was another source for the terrorist operation. That source is diamonds. It appears that in west Africa in particular, and in Sierra Leone, where terrorist organizations have taken control of the production of diamonds, they are not only using these diamonds to promote their terrorism in west Africa, but they are exchanging these diamonds in international commerce among terrorist groups.

In Sierra Leone and other countries, we have seen absolutely barbaric conduct by these terrorists in west Africa. We have seen people who have been killed and mutilated, hundreds if not thousands of people who faced amputations of their hands, arms, legs, and feet as terrorist payback for their lack of loyalty to the terrorist cause.

How do these terrorists keep moving along? They are mining diamonds which eventually find their way into some of the most comfortable, democratic, and peaceful parts of this world.

We have introduced legislation, the Conflict Diamonds Act, which will require a certification of the country of origin for diamonds so we can starve out the diamonds that are coming out of west Africa and other places where they are supporting terrorism.

This is so important. It was important before September 11. It is more important now because we have come to learn that Osama bin Laden gathered these diamonds before September 11 as his way of bankrolling his terrorist operation. Diamonds do not leave a paper trail. A person with a handful of diamonds worth many thousands of dollars can stick them in his pocket or in a purse or in a packet and move through any metal detector, any security device undetected. That is a reality.

We have joined in a bipartisan fashion with the jewelry industry and with the diamond industry to promote the conflict diamonds bill to stop this illicit terrorist trade in diamonds.

The United States plays such a critical role when it comes to this issue. We in the United States import 65 percent of all the diamonds in the world. If we put strong standards in place and our allies who have joined us in this war against terrorism also pass similar standards, we can starve off a source of money, a source of terrorism that is clearly becoming rampant, even as we speak.

Diamonds have always been a symbol of enduring love. Unfortunately, today they have become the currency of ter-

rorism. I know the House Ways and Means Committee had a hearing on this bill last week. I am happy the Senate passed this bill earlier this year, and we are going to have to address it again.

I call on all my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to consider this a matter of great urgency and join us in a bipartisan fashion. Senator FEINGOLD, Senator DEWINE, I, Congressman TONY HALL, and Congressman FRANK WOLF, in a true bipartisan fashion, have tried to move this important issue forward.

I close on this issue by giving special credit to Congressman TONY HALL, who has been a leader on this for years—not for months but for years. It is his good work that has brought us to this point. I am happy to be an ally of TONY HALL in any cause, but when it comes to a cause of this importance, I hope my colleagues will take a close look at this legislation.

#### AMERICA'S ECONOMY

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, as part of the challenge facing America today, we have to consider the state of America's economy, and it is a sad state of affairs. After almost 10 years of unparalleled prosperity in the history of the United States, during the past year we have seen terrible things occur—a massive growth in unemployment. The number of people who have been laid off across America is now reaching, unfortunately, historic levels. Last month saw the biggest 1-month increase in unemployment in 21 years. Nearly 7½ million Americans are now out of work, and the economists have warned us that a 1 or 2 million more may be losing their jobs over the next 12 months. Small and large businesses have faced this.

A friend of mine who deals with bankruptcies has told me we will be shocked as we hear the names of the major corporations and businesses which are going to go bankrupt in the near future. It is a fact of life this downturn in the economy is touching us in virtually every area of American life.

This is a time of year when many American businesses hope to show their greatest profit and success. This retail season around the holidays means so much to companies across America. Unfortunately, the sales are slow and the indication is clear that the American people are holding back. It is an understandable impulse on their part, understandable because they are not certain of their own stability in their job or their small business. They are uncertain about the future of our economy and, of course, the war which we are waging has led people to have a certain personal austerity, a little less flamboyance when it comes to their lifestyle. It is understandable. It reflects the spirit of sacrifice.